

October 29, 2010



Planning Department Newsletter



WALMART SUPERCENTER OPENS

The Walmart Supercenter on Bishop Boulevard held its grand opening on Wednesday, October 27. As many community members know, this event was a long time in coming.

The original application materials for this project were submitted to the city on October 28, 2004. Back then, the proposal was to build a 223,000-square-foot store and a 1,010-space parking lot, with a gasoline service station as an optional element. The public works department issued a Final Determination of Nonsignificance for the development in August of 2005 pursuant to the State Environmental Policy Act. A month later, the department approved the site plan for the proposal, subject to 35 conditions primarily related to public works improvements.

A local group called the Pullman Alliance for Responsible Development (PARD) appealed both of the decisions made by the public works department to the Pullman Hearing Examiner. Upon receipt of the appeal, Hearing Examiner John Montgomery conducted a public hearing over multiple days in January, 2006. The next month, Mr. Montgomery issued a ruling that affirmed the city's decisions, subject to further conditions requiring a traffic signal at the intersection of Bishop Boulevard and Fairmount Road (in addition to the traffic signal already planned for the Bishop Boulevard/Harvest Drive intersection); mandating a traffic signal at the intersection of Bishop Boulevard and Professional Mall Boulevard if Walmart established the gas station (unless a traffic analysis demonstrated such a signal was not warranted); and demanding a temporary halt to construction if archaeological remains were to be discovered on the property.

PARD appealed this Hearing Examiner determination to Whitman County Superior Court. After a hearing, Judge David Frazier sustained the Hearing Examiner's ruling in October of 2006. The following month, PARD appealed Judge Frazier's decision to the Court of Appeals in Spokane. In June of 2008, the Court of Appeals upheld the Superior Court's decision to sustain the ruling of the Hearing Examiner. In its documentation, the Court of Appeals stated, "A recurrent theme in PARD's

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The grand opening of the Walmart Supercenter occurred this past Wednesday.

HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER PLANNED FOR WSU CAMPUS

Washington State University is working with a private developer to bring a Hilton hotel and conference center to the WSU campus. The specific site, 7.5 acres in size, is located on the north side of North Fairway Drive, just east of the Student Recreation Center. Last month, the university applied to the city for a zoning map change at the property from the WSU category to the C3 General Commercial classification to facilitate this project. In the rezone application, WSU indicated that it wished to sell this parcel for construction of the commercial development. If the university transfers property to a private party, the zoning of the land must be changed from WSU to some other designation because the only activities allowed in the WSU zone are university related facilities and services.

The Planning Commission held its public hearing on the zone change request early this month. At this session, two members of the WSU Capital Planning and Development staff testified in support of the application and one resident from Juniper Way, speaking as a neutral party, asked questions about how traffic from commercial development at the site would be accommodated. After accepting these

comments, the Commission voted to recommend approval of the request. The City Council held its meeting to consider this matter on October 12. At that time, the Council unanimously approved the application.

According to WSU, the hotel and conference center development will be constructed in two phases. In the first phase, the Embassy Suites Hotel will be built with 120 to 150 sleeping rooms, and the adjoining conference center will encompass 8,000 to 12,000 square feet. In the second phase, the number of hotel rooms will expand to a total of 200, and the conference center will grow to as much as 20,000 square feet. The first phase is scheduled to begin next April and be completed by August of 2012. The university estimates the second phase will be finished by 2020.

WSU will maintain design oversight for the project. The university will also have the right of first refusal in the event that the private property owner decides to sell the property in the future.

Since the property is now zoned C3, the city will take responsibility for permit review of any proposed development projects there. Also, the city will receive its customary share of tax revenue generated by this property once it is sold to a private party.



In this photograph, the hotel/conference center site is shown in the foreground, with the Student Rec Center and other campus buildings behind.

WALMART *(CONT.)*

appeal is that the examiner failed to enter adequate findings of fact and conclusions of law for review....However, we consider the examiner's findings of fact and conclusions of law to be adequate for review and reject PARD's claims to the contrary."

In June, 2009, Walmart submitted a revised site plan to the city which involved a downsizing of the project. This amended plan showed a 155,000-square-foot store, a 720-stall parking lot, and no

optional gas station. The city approved this modified site plan in July of 2009.

The city issued a building permit for the store on December 11, 2009. The contractors took advantage of last year's mild winter to work steadily on the project through to its completion earlier this month. The store, which is open 24 hours a day, offers groceries, pharmaceuticals, optometric products, lawn and garden supplies, and general merchandise.

NEW COURTESY NOTICE FOR AGENDA MATERIALS

The planning department is always interested in promoting citizen participation. One of the ways we do that is by informing citizens of planning committee meeting agendas. For example, our staff sends each Planning Commission, Board of Adjustment, and Landmarks Commission meeting agenda to all local media outlets. The department also posts the agenda and accompanying background materials on the city's website several days before a committee's meeting (just like the administration staff does with the City Council meeting materials).

Over the past few years, the planning department went a step further and mailed a paper copy of the full agenda packet to certain civic organizations in the city. In the interest of preserving resources, though, the department recently discontinued this practice. Instead, planning staff has initiated a procedure in which it sends an email message to parties who have an interest in a particular committee's business. The email message contains the agenda as an attachment, and informs the recipient that the background documentation is available on the city's website. This new procedure was suggested by a citizen as a low-cost way to let interested community members know of upcoming meeting topics. If you would like to sign up for this new service, please contact administrative assistant Bethany Johnson at (509) 338-3213 or bethany.johnson@pullman-wa.gov.



Pending Land Use Proposals

Displayed below are land use applications submitted to the planning or public works department or city-generated proposals for planning provisions that require a public meeting, public notice, or site plan review in accordance with the city code.

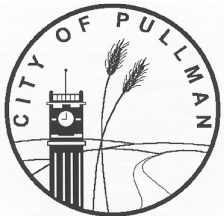
PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	STATUS
Certified Local Government Program	establish historic preservation program for community	Citywide	CC requested ordinance revisions on 1/20/09; ad hoc committee met on 2/9/09 to address ordinance revisions; CC review of draft ordinance scheduled for 11/9
College Hill Architectural Design Standards	formulate design standards for new construction	College Hill Core	PC public forum held 7/28; PC meeting to set direction held 9/22; staff preparing draft standards
City Urban Growth Area Expansion	expand urban growth area to accommodate future growth	greater Pullman area	PC public forum held 4/29/09; PC meetings to provide direction held 7/22/09 and 10/27/10; PC meeting scheduled for 11/17
Mader North Annexation	annex 510 acres to city	north of Military Hill between Palouse Highway and Brayton Road	PC recommended approval on 10/27; CC meeting scheduled for 11/15
Johnson Avenue Storage Lot site plan (09-10)	construct 360-sq-ft carport and conduct grading on 4.9-acre site	1222 SE Johnson Avenue	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Hilltop Inn Addition site plan (10-7)	demolish Hilltop Restaurant and construct 54-room addition to existing motel	928 NW Olsen Street	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
City Equipment Shop Expansion site plan (10-8)	renovate and expand shop by 10,250 square feet at city maintenance grounds	725 NW Guy Street	staff requested applicant to revise site plan

KEY TO ZONING DISTRICTS: R1 Single Family Residential; RT Residential Transitional; R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential; R3 Medium Density Multi-Family Residential; R4 High Density Multi-Family Residential; C1 Neighborhood Commercial; C2 Central Business District; C3 General Commercial; I1 Light Industrial; I2 Heavy Industrial; IRP Industrial Research Park; WSU Washington State University

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS: CC: City Council; PC: Planning Commission; BOA: Board of Adjustment; DOE: State Department of Ecology; LC: Landmarks Commission

NOTES: 1) If an applicant fails to act on a pending application for a period of six months, said application will be dropped from the above list.. 2) Numbers in parentheses are planning staff's internal file numbers. 3) Site plan review by city staff is generally conducted for proposed construction of developments other than single family homes, duplexes, or manufactured homes; it does not apply to most construction on the WSU campus.





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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.PULLMAN-WA.GOV
